

Interracial News Service

A DIGEST OF TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN HUMAN RELATIONS

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"WE WORK FOR PEACE IN OUR OWN HEARTS AND OUR OWN COMMUNITIES."

—Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt.

AMONG AMERICAN INDIANS

Claims Paid—The United States Court of Claims has awarded over 16½ million dollars to four tribes of Indians in Oregon, to compensate them for the lands which the United States took from them almost a hundred years ago. . . . It was determined that 2,772,580 acres had been taken from the Alcea Bands and that they were entitled to payment at \$1.20 an acre. Interest at the rate of 5 per cent was also awarded. . . . The National Congress of American Indians . . . filed a brief amicus when the case was before the Supreme Court. (*Washington Bulletin*, National Congress of American Indians, Feb. 1950.)

Navajo-Hopi Rehabilitation—The revised Navajo-Hopi Rehabilitation Bill (S.2734) has passed both the Senate and the House and is now in a conference committee. This bill was introduced after the previous Bill, S.1407 (*Interracial News Service*, March-April 1949) was vetoed by President Truman because it contained provisions to subject these Indians to the laws and courts of their respective states. In his budget message the President requested funds to inaugurate the ten-year Navajo-Hopi Rehabilitation Program. The Appropriation Bill as introduced in the House carries amounts much less than asked by the President, but it would provide \$8,600,000 for school, hospital and other buildings; \$968,000 for roads; \$1,713,000 for further irrigation; \$140,000 for continuing the employment service for the Navajos. (*Indian Truth*, Jan.-March 1950.)

South Dakota—By legislative enactment, South Dakota has set up a commission "to consider and study living conditions among Indians residing within the state, with the purpose in view of establishing a method of absorbing the Indian people into the economy of the state." It is reported that the Governor has appointed the Rt. Rev. W. Blair Roberts, Episcopal Bishop, as a member of this Committee. An act creating scholarships in state educational institutions for persons of at least one-fourth Indian blood was passed, with an appropriation of \$5,000 voted for this purpose. (From *National Fellowship of Indian Workers*, Spring 1950.)

Penitentiary Term—Four full-blooded young Indians at Moscow, Idaho, ages ranging from 19 to 23, are under sentence to spend fourteen years in the Idaho state penitentiary for stealing one sheep. Peace officers estimate the value of the animal at \$12.00. The defendants pleaded guilty and agreed to waive their right to counsel after the Latah County prosecutor advised them they were appearing before "as lenient a judge as we have in the state."

The Indians are free under \$150 bond each, pending an appeal to the State Supreme Court. The case has stirred tensions between Indian and white in the state. . . . The Association on American Indian Affairs, New York City, has en-

tered the case as an ally of the defendants. (*Statement of Richard L. Neuberger to the Association on American Indian Affairs, Inc.*)

The Waccamaws—Are the small groups of American Indians located mostly in the eastern part of our country and not under the Bureau of Indian Affairs a forgotten people?

The plight of the Waccamaws, a group of Indians in North Carolina, makes this question pertinent. They have come to the attention of Representative Norris Poulson who on February 6 introduced H.R. 7153 in their behalf.

According to a letter to Rep. Poulson from James Evan Alexander, author, who has lived among the Waccamaws, about seventy families comprise the population of this tribe. They reside on patches of ground a foot or two above the water level of swamp near Bolton, in southeastern North Carolina. With large rainfall each year their sustenance crops are usually destroyed. Their principal source of cash income is from logging and pulpwood; for the most part they depend upon truckers who scour the swampland and buy the timber products at the side of the road for very low price.

Bad roads and distances create the problem of insufficient medical aid, with consequent epidemics, malnutrition, high infant-mortality, etc. The present school is inadequate.

Says the letter: "This social problem is a complex one in which these Indians are caught between the color lines of a South which is predominately and almost equally divided, white and black. Exhibiting the fierce racial pride which is the trait of Indians generally, the Waccamaws have consistently resisted all efforts of their white neighbors to designate them as Negroes."

A compiled history of their right to be recognized and aided by the Federal Government was presented by Mr. Alexander and his wife

The matter in these pages is presented for the reader's information. It is not to be construed as reflecting the attitudes of the Department of Race Relations or of The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America.

to the Office of Indian Affairs, and with subsequent approval of the Waccamaws for the presentation of their plight to Congress, the Poulson bill was introduced. It authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to "accept voluntary conveyances of lands owned by Waccamaw Indians in North Carolina and to issue trust patents for such lands . . ." Also that "members of the said tribe shall enjoy those rights which are enjoyed by all other Indian tribes, including the right to participate in Indian educational facilities, health facilities, loan funds, and all other privileges extended to Indians and Indian tribes by the Act of June 18, 1934, as amended, without prejudice to the rights of citizenship now held by the said Waccamaw Indians."

The cooperation of such organizations as the Civil Liberties Union, the Home Missions Council of North America, and the Association on American Indian Affairs, has been secured in support of such legislation.

Interstate Indian Conference — Officials from 15 states including four governors, met at Minneapolis, Minnesota, on March 14 at the invitation of Gov. Youngdahl of Minnesota. Officials of the Indian Service and representatives from other organizations active on Indian rights were also invited.

In an all-day session such points were discussed as: settlement of treaty claims, improvement in Indian housing, systematic education and training of Indians to be self-supporting, adequate and equitable law enforcement in Indian communities; employment, etc.

. . . The major decision of the conference was a resolution to establish a permanent Interstate Council on Indian Affairs. . . . to collect and annotate information on the present status of Indian residents in the states represented . . . and to set up avenues of cooperation with all existing agencies interested in American Indian welfare.

Included in the attendance were representatives from Minnesota, North and South Dakota, Wisconsin, Montana, Washington, Oregon, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Utah. (From *Association on American Indian Affairs*.)

PENDULUM SWINGING In Education

"Campus Opinion"—The first south-wide Conference on Discrimination in Higher Education, sponsored by 225 educators from 116 colleges and universities, and co-ordinated by the Southern Conference Educational Fund, Inc., was held at Atlanta University on April 8. The group debated for four hours the various controversial aspects of the regional education and segregation subjects that have caused a cleavage in southern educational circles. The conference agreed that "campus opinion" among students and teachers in white schools of higher learning was largely in favor of unsegregated attendance. A resolution calling for the removal of all segregation laws in education was adopted unanimously. (*New York Times*, April 9.)

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What Will Our Highest Tribunal Say?—In an editorial, "Up to the Court!" the *Pittsburgh Courier* of April 8 commenting on the case of Heman Sweatt versus the University of Texas (*Interracial News Service*, Jan.-Feb. 1948, End of Summer, 1948; Fall, 1949), now before the United States Supreme Court, says:

"The high court was asked to reverse its fifty-four-year-old ruling that states may provide 'separate but equal' facilities for colored and white citizens. The court's decision, when it comes, will be a crucial one, a landmark in judicial history, one way or the other. . . . will directly or indirectly affect every person, colored or white, in the United States."

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Texas Depends Upon Old Decisions—In an article in the *New York Times* of April 18, Arthur Krock, columnist, gives the view of the state of Texas in the segregation issue as stated in a brief filed on behalf of the state by Attorney General Price Daniel. In substance the brief disclosed that "if the high court should grant petitions like Heman Sweatt's, it would have to eat thousands of its own words and words uttered by past justices, including Holmes, Hughes, Taft, Stone and Brandeis. . . . Among the points listed as fortified by former decisions are:

1.—The Supreme Court has repeatedly ruled that the power of the states to provide equal but separate education does not violate the 14th Amendment. Also, "the court in many decisions has held the states are under no duty under the Federal Constitution to furnish education to anyone."

2.—The background and contemporary construction of the 14th Amendment sustain the many findings that when the states do provide educational facilities they may segregate white and black if the facilities are separate and equal.

Mr. Daniel also referred to a decision of Chief Justice Taft in a case in 1927 growing out of segregation of a Chinese girl from white students under Mississippi law:

" . . . Were this a new question it would call for very full argument and consideration, but we think that it is the same question which has been many times decided to be within the constitutional power of the State Legislature to settle without intervention of the federal courts under the Federal Constitution," the decision stated.

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Maryland in a Reversed Situation—Maryland must provide equal facilities within the state for Negroes who want to attend nursing school, the Court of Appeals ruled on April 14. The decision struck down the state's contention that it could send Negroes out of the state as part of its segregation policy. Declaring the University of Maryland cannot bar Negroes from its school of nursing, the unanimous opinion rejected the state's interpretation of the southern regional education compact. Esther McCready, 19-year-old Baltimore Negro, thus won her fight for a writ of mandamus compelling the University to admit her as a student nurse. The state offered to send her instead to the Meharry Medical College at Nashville, Tenn. under the 10-state regional compact. (*Richmond Times Dispatch*, April 15.)

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In the Nation's Capital—The District's (of Columbia) segregated school system was upheld during February by the United States Court of Appeals in a 2-to-1 decision. The opinion, written by Judge E. Barrett Prettyman, supported the right of Congress under the Constitution to legislate a separate school system for Negroes. . . . The dissent by Judge Henry W. Edgerton said segregation in schools



was unconstitutional, and noted inequalities offered Negroes in buildings and courses. "It is plain," he said, that Negro students "are denied better schooling and given worse because of their color. This the Constitution forbids." (*Washington Post*, Feb. 15.)

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United Negro College Fund — The 1950 goal of \$1,400,000 for the United Negro College Fund (*Interracial News Service*, End-of-Year 1946; Early Summer 1948; Jan.-Feb. 1949) has been announced by the seventh annual campaign officers. The goal represents approximately 10 per cent of the combined educational budgets of the 32 member colleges and universities of the Fund which are located in 13 states from Pennsylvania to Texas. The total of \$1,156,000 raised during the 1949 campaign exceeded by some \$85,000 the year before, and is the largest amount raised by the Fund for its member colleges in any one year since it was established in 1944. The contributions of 1949 came from 43 states and 3 foreign countries including gifts from more than 3,100 business firms and corporations, 231 philanthropic foundations, and from students in 76 schools, colleges and universities in the North and South. (Release from *United Negro College Fund*.)

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In Housing

Federal Housing Commissioner Franklin D. Richards reported during March that construction of housing for Negroes is booming. He said that during the first two months of this year the government insured about \$85,000,000 worth of mortgages to finance the building of an estimated 12,500 dwelling units for Negroes, more than the total for all of 1949. . . . "It is obvious that the building industry is recognizing the real possibilities in the long overlooked market among Negroes for privately financed housing," he said. (*Chicago Sun Times*, March 19.)

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Governor Dewey Evicts Jim Crow — Gov. Thomas E. Dewey's civil rights program was rounded out during March with a law for New York state against segregation or discrimination in public housing and limited dividend housing be-

cause of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry. The new law, effective July 1, applies to all publicly assisted housing accommodations to be constructed. . . . "Discrimination in housing can defeat protection against discrimination in schools and in many other activities. . . . This bill strikes at this evil in an essential of living," the Governor said. (*Kansas City Call*, April 7.)

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In Employment

FEPC "Toothless" — The House on February 23 handed President Truman a "toothless" victory by approving 241 to 176 a Fair Employment Practices bill without criminal penalties. The measure was supported by a Republican-southern Democrat coalition and was hammered out in a bitter, fifteen-hour filibuster session that ended at 3:19 o'clock in the morning. (*Kansas City Call*, Feb. 24.)

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North Carolina Churches

The announced intention of the Ku Klux Klan to organize in North Carolina towns is meeting determined opposition from church groups. At the request of the local ministers association, the Raleigh city council adopted a strong "anti-mask" ordinance. Ministers in Charlotte, Tarboro and a number of other towns have requested similar action.

A constructive approach to racial tensions is demonstrated in the annual report of the Mecklenburg Baptist interracial commission. Supported by Baptists of both races in the Charlotte area, the commission has placed its major emphasis on leadership training for Negro churches. But at the same time it is increasing efforts to promote intervisitation between white and Negro churches and other constructive interracial experiences. (*The Christian Century*, March 1.)

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"Something Vital and Different"

In an editorial entitled "Justice Down South," the *New York Herald Tribune* of March 20 said:

"Let us, for a change, speak well of Mississippi. An all-white jury convicted a white man last Thursday of the murder of three Negro children. The bestial

crime was committed in January, and justice moved with utmost speed. The jury deliberated only an hour and a half; the punishment was a mandatory sentence to life imprisonment. The District Attorney's peroration included these words: 'Mississippi is coming out from the dark shadows of yesterday. Do your duty as Mississippians.' . . .

"Mississippi has done an excellent job and the rest of the country applauds.

"More light is also breaking over Georgia. On the same day that the Mississippi jury acted on stern duty, a Federal judge in Atlanta demonstrated that Negroes have the same rights as any other Georgians. A sheriff and his deputy were each sentenced to twelve months in prison and fined \$1,000 for delivering seven Negroes to a masked mob for beating.

". . . It is perfectly evident," continued the editorial, "on the basis of one week's news from Mississippi and Georgia, that something vital and different is stirring through the South."

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Among the Actors

Actors Equity Association is taking steps to improve the lot of Negro actors on tour, it was learned yesterday. A committee formed by Equity Council, governing body of the union . . . is seeking methods of counteracting the discriminatory practices of hotels, restaurants and transportation companies which, William Ross, committee chairman emphasized, exist elsewhere in the United States besides in the South. (*New York Herald Tribune*, March 12.)

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In the Army

The Army has taken another major step in the field of racial equality of opportunity — dropping the quota system of enlistment of Negroes. An order just issued declares that "effective with the month of April all enlistments in the Army within over-all recruiting quotas will be open to qualified applicants without regard to race or color." Heretofore, the number of Negro recruits accepted each month has been limited so as to keep the percentage of members of that race in the Army roughly equivalent to the proportion of Negroes in the total population — about 10 per cent. (John G. Norris in *Washington Post*, April 2.)

WE BOW OUR HEADS

Interracial News Service wishes here to express reverence and gratitude for the memory and work of several friends whose recent passing is a great loss to the world and to the cause of humanity in general.

DR. THOMAS JESSE JONES, 76, died January 5 at home in New York City; for 35 years director of the Phelps-Stokes Fund; one-time director of research at Hampton Institute; made the well-known historical study (for the U. S. Bureau of Education) on "Negro Education in the United States."

DR. EDWIN R. EMBREE, 66, died February 28, suddenly, in New York City; president of the Julius Rosenwald Fund until it was liquidated in 1948; author of books on the Negro and race relations.

DR. CHARLES R. DREW, 45, international authority on blood plasma, was killed in an auto accident on April 1, while piloting several physicians to a medical clinic at Tuskegee Institute, Alabama. He was chief surgeon at Freedmen's Hospital, Washington; pioneer in the use of blood plasma for the saving of life, and was director of the first blood plasma bank in the United States, which later grew to a project supplying the American armed forces with 13,000,000 pints of blood during World War II.

DR. CARTER G. WOODSON, father of Negro History Week; died on April 3 at home in Washington, D. C., at age of 74; founder and director of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History and its publication, the Journal of Negro History. Through published historical documents about the Negro, he revolutionized the thinking of America and other countries on the subject.

MR. JOHN M. GLENN, 91; died in New York Hospital on April 21. An incorporator and one of the original trustees of the Russell Sage Foundation, New York City, and its director from 1907 to 1931. One-time president of the National Conference of Charities and Correction (now the National Conference of Social Work) of which he was a member for 63 years. For many years a member of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America and an adviser on the program of several of its departments including the Department of Race Relations.

AIDS TO CONFERENCE GROUPS

The Department of Race Relations has a limited supply of helpful, up-to-date literature for use among conference and study groups in the church and community.

A Program Packet, especially designed for Race Relations Sunday but of help the year-round, gives program suggestions, project ideas, and worship services for children's, women's and young people's groups. Included also is information on Indians, Negroes, Spanish-speaking people in the United States—their present status and trends of progress among them. Reading lists are also included. Price \$1.10.

"We 'Belong' to the Brotherhood," pamphlet by Olivia P. Stokes and Winburn T. Thomas, covers various phases of youth and the race question, with lists of resource materials and an opinion test. \$.25.

"Your Community and Its Unity," helpful manual on survey, planning, and methods to improve race relations. \$.15.

"The Christian Citizen and Civil Rights," Dorothy I. Height and J. Oscar Lee, a guide to study and action, based on the Report of the President's Committee on Civil Rights—especially designed for leaders in the churches, community groups and organizations where work is being done to secure for all people their basic civil rights. \$.50.

"The Church and Race Relations," pamphlet, gives an analysis of segregation within the churches and help to those working to eliminate these practices. \$.05.

"The Churches and Human Rights," pamphlet, covers the basic human rights of every individual and a challenge to the churches, the state, and all citizens in observance of these rights. Included in the pamphlet are the Resolution on Religious Liberty adopted by the World Council of Churches at Amsterdam, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations. \$.05.

All of this material may be secured to advantage in bulk orders. Summer conference groups are urged to place orders now while supply lasts. Send to: the Department of Race Relations, Federal Council of Churches, 297 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Christian Brotherhood Laboratories

For the second year, an Interdenominational Institute on Racial and Cultural Relations will be held this summer at Lincoln University, Pennsylvania; and preceding this a similar Institute will be initiated at Eden Seminary, Webster Groves, Missouri.

The Institutes are sponsored by the Interdenominational Committee on Cooperative Work in Race Relations, of which J. Oscar Lee, Executive Secretary, Department of Race Relations, The Federal Council of Churches, is chairman. They serve the practical needs of the Protestant churches in their progress toward the nonsegregated church in a non-segregated society. Through worship, panel discussions, visual aids, group study, etc. and with dynamic leadership, knowledge is gained in methods and techniques which can be used in the local community for developing inclusive churches and church-related institutions.

The Institute at Eden Seminary will be held July 10-14; and at Lincoln, August 7-11. Enrollment will be limited—from local churches, church councils, administrators of church-related institutions, YMCA, YWCA and like groups. A basic knowledge of race relations is essential.

Further details as to fees, etc., will be sent to those who request it for attendance. Write to J. Oscar Lee, 297 Fourth Ave., New York 10, who is Adviser to the Institutes. The Deans are William H. McConaghay, Director of the Institute on Racial and Cultural Relations, Presbyterian Church, USA, and Galen R. Weaver, Race Relations Department, American Missionary Association, Congregational Christian Churches.

DEPARTMENT OF RACE RELATIONS

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